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13 February 1962

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CENTRAL

INTELLIGENCE

BULLETIN



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USSR: The moderate and nonpolemical tone of Khrushchev's 11 February proposal that the heads of government open the 18-nation disarmament meeting in Geneva suggests that he may be less interested in actually having the heads of government meet than in demonstrating his willingness to negotiate with the West. Khrushchev made a special point of underscoring the value of "direct contacts" between state leaders as an important "practice of international relations," and also emphasized that a meeting in Geneva should not be regarded as a substitute for a summit conference. One of Khrushchev's objectives therefore may be to lay the groundwork for a summit meeting or top-level bilateral meetings at a later date, with a broader agenda to include Berlin.

Khrushchev's concluding statement, expressing his hope that his "motives" would be understood "correctly," also implies that his proposal was intended as a sign of his readiness to negotiate. He avoided a substantive answer to the Western proposals for dividing disarmament into three categories for consideration. This could be the basis for further Khrushchev letters with new proposals on European security and partial disarmament, as hinted by Soviet diplomats in London last week.

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*Thailand: Prime Minister Sarit on 12 February again expressed to Ambassador Young his strong dissatisfaction with SEATO. Pursuing his earlier criticism of SEATO as "useless" because of its unanimity requirement for military action, Sarit said he thinks "it would be better to be out of SEATO like South Vietnam and just get assistance from the United States." He asserted, "Things. . . must be changed or we will leave SEATO or at least not attend meetings." Thai criticism of SEATO has been sharpened recently by the deteriorating situation in northwest- ern Laos, where the proximity of Communist military activity to Thailand's northern border has increased Bangkok's fears of infiltration and subversion.

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Nepal: Hit-and-run attacks during the past few days by Nepali Congress party members on several police posts in southern Nepal are part of the exiles' continuing program of harassing King Mahendra. These raids do not appear to threaten the King's rule, but are adding to the rebels' arsenal of small arms, and proving to be a major irritant in relations between Katmandu and New Delhi.

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*Laos: British Ambassador Addis reports that in the talks he and Soviet Ambassador Abramov had yesterday in Khang Khay with Souvanna and Souphanouvong, the two Laotian princes

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refused to cease military pressure on Nam Tha in northwest-
ern Laos as a step toward resumption of negotiations on forma-
tion of a coalition government. Souvanna said he would not or-
der a cessation of firing on the Nam Tha airfield since he wished
to interdict the reinforcements sent in by Phoumi. Souphanhoun-
vong stated flatly that he would continue the military pressure on
Nam Tha "for political reasons." []

When Addis met later with Souvanna alone, however, and in-
formed him of US views, Souvanna stated that this was "very en-
couraging." Addis says that Souvanna appeared to appreciate the
need for US agreement on his cabinet selections as well as for
the cessation of military pressure on Nam Tha before any real
negotiations could begin. Ambassador Brown, who comments
that it is Souphanhounvong who "calls the tune on Nam Tha," doubts
that the pressure on that city will stop. Brown believes that Sou-
vanna will now go to Luang Prabang and talk with Phoumi, but
that these talks will end in another impasse. []

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The Secretary of State

The Under Secretary of State

The Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

The Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

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